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LOWRIE, LANDO & ANASTASI
RIVERFRONT OFFICE
ONE MAIN STREET, ELEVENTH FLOOR
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02142

EXAMINER

KLINGER, SCOTT M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2153

DATE MAILED: 07/01/2004

9

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/814,246

Applicant(s)

SCHAAF ET AL.

Examiner

Scott M. Klinger

Art Unit

2153

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 March 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-75 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-75 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-75 are pending.

Priority

A claim for priority from provisional application number 60/190,613 has been made. The effective filing date for subject matter in the application is 20 March 2000.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-13, 15-29, 31-45, 47-61, 63-72, 74, and 75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Brandt et al. (U.S. Patent Number 5,875,327, hereinafter “Brandt”). Brandt discloses hierarchy of preferences and preference groups. Brandt shows,

In referring to claim 1,

- Retrieving from the computer-readable medium a plurality of sets of configuration parameters for configuring a network device of the communications network, wherein each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups, and wherein for each set, for one or more configuration parameters, the set defines a value for the configuration parameter; combining the plurality of sets of configuration parameters to produce an entity profile for the first entity, wherein the entity profile comprises one or more configuration parameters and comprises, for each parameter, a corresponding value assigned from one of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters;

“During the initialization of a client workstation, an initial set of preferences are downloaded and processed, with the resultant configuration of the terminal being the combination of the manufacturer's and the administrator's defined preferences. Then, when a user signs on to the workstation, his additional preferences are downloaded and processed, with the resultant configuration being the combination of all of the downloaded preferences. The result is a workstation that is configured for the needs of the manufacturer, the owner/administrator, a group of users, and the end user.” (Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-25)

In referring to claims 2, 18, 34, and 50

- Configuring the network device of the communications network using the entity profile.
Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-25 (see full quote above)

In referring to claims 3, 19, 35, and 51

- For each of the one or more configuration parameters, assigning a value from one of the plurality of configuration sets to the configuration parameter:
Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-25 (see full quote above)

In referring to claims 4, 20, 36, 52, and 67

- The hierarchy is an administrative hierarchy, and each entity group is a group of administrative entities:
“During the initialization of a client workstation, an initial set of preferences are downloaded and processed, with the resultant configuration of the terminal being the combination of the manufacturer's and the administrator's defined preferences.” (Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-20)

In referring to claims 5, 21, 37, 53, and 68,

The hierarchy is a network device hierarchy, and each entity group is a group of network devices:

Brandt, Fig. 4 shows each entity group is a group of network devices

In referring to claims 6, 22, 38, 54, and 69

- The hierarchy is a network user hierarchy, and each entity group is a group of network users:

Brandt, Fig. 4 shows each entity group is a group of network users

In referring to claims 7, 23, 39, and 55,

- A first combining procedure is accessible on the communications network, the first combining procedure defining a procedure by which to combine the plurality of sets of configuration parameters:

"As noted, the system includes a mechanism for resolving conflicting parameters. Resolving conflicts may be done in any manner such as one that utilizes a "last one applied wins" scenario. In such a case, an end user's preference will overrides a group, administrator, or manufacturer preference, since a user preference will likely be the last one to be downloaded and applied to the workstation." (Brandt, col. 4, lines 26-32)

- Combining the plurality of sets of configuration parameters in accordance with the combining procedure.

"Then, when a user signs on to the workstation, his additional preferences are downloaded and processed, with the resultant configuration being the combination of all of the downloaded preferences. The result is a workstation that is configured for the needs of the manufacturer, the owner/administrator, a group of users, and the end user." (Brandt, col. 4, lines 20-25)

In referring to claims 8, 24, 40, and 56,

- A plurality of combining procedures, comprising the first combining procedure, are available on the communications network, and the method further comprises an act of selecting the first combining procedure from the plurality of combining procedures:

“For example, in configuring the hardware, the manufacturer defines a preference to indicate that station configuration passwords are required but they are not currently enabled. The administrator, in his preference file, enables the station configuration passwords, and sets it to a specific value. The end user of the workstation would, and should have no option with respect to using a password since this is an administrator level of function.” (Brandt, col. 4, lines 35-42)

In referring to claims 9, 25, 41, 57, and 72,

- The first combining procedure specifies one or more of the entity groups for which corresponding sets of configuration parameters are not to be combined:

“However, the system is contemplated to be flexible enough to allow for certain preferences that can not be modified by later applied configuration data.” (Brandt, col. 4, lines 32-35)

- Refraining from combining one or more sets of configuration parameters, each of the one or more sets corresponding to one of the entity groups specified by the first combining procedure:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 35-42 (see full quote above)

In referring to claims 10, 26, 42, and 58,

- A first of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters corresponds to a highest entity group of the hierarchy:

Brandt, Fig. 4 shows the first set of configuration parameters corresponds to the highest entity of the hierarchy

- Combining the plurality of sets of configuration parameters in accordance with the hierarchy, starting with the first set of configuration parameters:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-25 (see full quote above)

In referring to claims 11, 27, 43, 59, and 70,

- A first of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters defines a first value for a first configuration parameter and defines the first value as being a final value for the first configuration parameter:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-20 (see full quote above); Brandt, col. 4, lines 32-35 (see full quote above)

- A second of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters defines a second value for the first configuration parameter:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 20-25 (see full quote above)

- Accessing the first set of configuration parameters:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-20 (see full quote above)

- Assigning the first value to the first configuration parameter and marking the first value as a final value for the first configuration parameter:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 32-35 (see full quote above)

- Accessing the second set of configuration parameters and refraining from assigning the second value to the first configuration parameter in response to the first value being marked as the final value for the first configuration parameter:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 35-42 (see full quote above)

In referring to claims 12, 28, 44, 60, and 71

- A first of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters defines a first value for a first configuration parameter and defines the first value as being aggregable, accessing the first set of configuration parameters, and assigning the first value to the first configuration parameter:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-20 (see full quote above)

- Marking the first value as aggregable:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 32-35 (see full quote above), the ability to mark a value as non-aggregable inherently implies the ability to mark a value as aggregable

- A second of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters defines a second value for the first configuration parameter, accessing the second set of configuration parameters, in response to the first value being marked as aggregable, aggregating the second value to the first value to produce an aggregated value and assigning the aggregated value to the first configuration parameter:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 20-25 (see full quote above)

In referring to claims 13, 29, 45, and 61,

- A first of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters defines a first value for a first configuration parameter; accessing the first set of configuration parameters; assigning the first value to the first configuration parameter:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-20 (see full quote above)

- A second of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters defines a second value for the first configuration parameter; accessing the second set of configuration parameters:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 20-25 (see full quote above)

- Overriding the first value by assigning the second value to the first configuration parameter:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 26-32 (see full quote above)

In referring to claims 15, 31, 47, 63, and 74,

- The entity is a user of a network device that is part of the communications network:

"It is a further advantage of the present invention that a user be able to automatically enact his or her preferences any time the user signs on to any workstation in the network." (Brandt, col. 3, lines 13-15)

In referring to claims 16, 32, 48, 64, and 75,

- The plurality of sets of configuration parameters are stored in a relational database on the computer-readable medium, and accessing the relational database to retrieve the plurality of sets of configuration parameters:

“The present invention provides a system and method of workstation configuration that includes a multi-level hierarchy management of preferences which are essentially managed and stored with a file server, rather than with each individual workstation.”
(Brandt, col. 2, lines 18-22)

In referring to claim 17,

- A configuration management module comprising one or more inputs to receive from the computer-readable medium a plurality of sets of configuration parameters for configuring a network device of the communications network:

Brandt, col. 4, lines 15-25 (see full quote above)

- Each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups:
Brandt, Fig. 4 shows that each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups
- For each set, for one or more configuration parameters, the set defines a value for the configuration parameter, logic to combine the plurality of sets of configuration parameters to produce an entity profile for the first entity:
Brandt, Fig. 4 shows one or more configuration parameters and the set defines a value for the configuration parameter; *Brandt, col. 4, lines 32-35* (see full quote above)
- The entity profile comprises one or more configuration parameters and comprises, for each parameter, a corresponding value assigned from one of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters, and an output to output the entity profile:
Brandt, Fig. 4 shows the entity profile comprises one or more configuration parameters and comprises, for each parameter, a corresponding value assigned from one of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters

In referring to claim 33,

- Means for retrieving from the computer-readable medium a plurality of sets of configuration parameters for configuring a network device of the communications network:

"The preference manager comprises a selection mechanism for 1) selecting relevant preference files from each of a plurality of hierarchy levels stored on a file server, and 2) causing configuration information from the selected preference files to be downloaded to a client. It further includes a coalescing mechanism for applying the downloaded configuration information to a specific workstation." (Brandt, col. 2, lines 31-37)

- Each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups, and wherein for each set, for one or more configuration parameters, the set defines a value for the configuration parameter:

Brandt, Fig. 4 shows each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups, and wherein for each set, for one or more configuration parameters, the set defines a value for the configuration parameter

- Means for combining the plurality of sets of configuration parameters to produce an entity profile for the first entity:

Brandt, col. 2, lines 20-25 (see full quote above)

- The entity profile comprises one or more configuration parameters and comprises, for each parameter, a corresponding value assigned from one of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters:

Brandt, Fig. 4 shows the entity profile comprises one or more configuration parameters and comprises, for each parameter, a corresponding value assigned from one of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters

In referring to claim 49,

- Retrieving from the computer-readable medium a plurality of sets of configuration parameters for configuring a network device of the communications network:

Brandt, col. 2, lines 31-37 (see full quote above)

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- Each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups, and wherein for each set, for one or more configuration parameters, the set defines a value for the configuration parameter:

Brandt, Fig. 4 shows each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups, and wherein for each set, for one or more configuration parameters, the set defines a value for the configuration parameter

- Combining the plurality of sets of configuration parameters to produce an entity profile for the first entity, wherein the entity profile comprises one or more configuration parameters and comprises, for each parameter, a corresponding value assigned from one of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters.

Brandt, col. 4, lines 20-25 (see full quote above)

In referring to claim 65,

- A computer-readable medium:

Brandt, col. 2, lines 31-37 (see full quote above)

- First signals tangibly-embodied on the computer-readable medium, the signals defining, for an entity associated with a communications network and that belongs to one or more entity groups of a hierarchy of entity groups, a plurality of sets of configuration parameters for configuring a network device of the communications network, wherein each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups and, for each set, for one or more configuration parameters, the set defines a value for the configuration parameter:

Brandt, Fig. 4 shows each set corresponds to either the entity or one of the entity groups and, for each set, for one or more configuration parameters, the set defines a value for the configuration parameter

In referring to claim 66,

- At least two of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters define a value for a same configuration parameter:

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Brandt, Fig. 4 shows at least two of the plurality of sets of configuration parameters (MFR, INSTALLATION, USER1, USER2) define a value for a same configuration parameter (TRACE).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 14, 30, 46, 62, and 73 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brandt in view of Mandal et al. (U.S. Patent Number 6,615,218, hereinafter, "Mandal"). Although Brandt shows substantial features of the claimed invention, including the system of claims 1, 17, 33, 49, and 65 (see 102 rejections above), Brandt does not show the entity is a telephony communications device that is part of the communications network. Nonetheless this feature is well known in the art and would have been an obvious modification to the system disclosed by Brandt as evidenced by Mandal.

In analogous art, Mandal discloses database for executing policies for controlling devices on a network. Mandal shows the entity is a telephony communications device that is part of the communications network: *"Devices 130 and 132 may include any device that can be controlled by commands sent over a computer network. This includes, but is not limited to, a printer, a facsimile machine, a PBX telephone exchange, a photocopier, or audio/visual equipment, such as a digital camera. Note that although devices 130 and 132 are illustrated as being coupled to server network 116, they may generally be coupled to any location on network 108."* (Mandal, col. 3, lines 37-44)

Given these teachings, a person of ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of modifying the system of Brandt so as to the entity is a telephony communications device that is part of the communications network, such as taught by Mandal, in

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order to configure all of the devices on the network.

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott M. Klinger whose telephone number is (703) 305-8285. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00am - 3:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenn Burgess can be reached on (703) 305-4792. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Scott M. Klinger
Examiner
Art Unit 2153

smk



GLENN B. BURGESS
SUPERVISOR
ART UNIT 2153